

Kentucky Teacher

DECEMBER 2000 - JANUARY 2001

State board studies teacher quality, retention issues

By Faun S. Fishback
Kentucky Department of Education

At its meeting in December, the Kentucky Board of Education began looking at several programs to help get well-trained teachers in Kentucky classrooms and keep them there. Department of Education staff will provide draft proposals of two initiatives and alternatives for another for the board to consider in February.

One program, the Professional Development Leadership and Mentor Fund, would provide additional compensation to mentoring teachers and administrators and to professional development leaders. Another program seeks to address teacher shortages by encouraging Kentuckians to enter the teaching profession. The program also would provide incentives to veteran teachers for remaining in the profession. Both programs must be developed to comply with legislation passed by the 2000 General Assembly.

The board also discussed increasing the terms for some highly skilled educators to three years.

Evaluation, recruitment regulations

The board also took action on several administrative regulations:

New evaluation criteria and requirements, adopted by the 2000 General Assembly, necessitated changes to the evaluation guidelines for certified personnel. The proposed amended would regulation require each district to develop a process of written evaluation for all certified personnel below the level of district superintendent. Local boards of education develop, adopt and implement the evaluation process

for superintendents.

For the most part, the changes delete obsolete language and modify some definitions. The amendments would add a requirement to provide resources to accomplish goals set in the professional growth plan and establish new evaluation criteria.

The proposed amendments also set Feb. 15 as the last date upon which a teacher may request in writing a third-party classroom observer in addition to the primary evaluator. The third-party observer must be trained in the teacher's content area or be a curriculum content specialist. If the evaluator and the certified teacher cannot agree upon selection of the third-party observer within five working days of the teacher's written request, the evaluator selects the third-party observer.

The proposed regulation would require school districts to explain the evaluation criteria and process to certified personnel. Any amendments to a local certified personnel evaluation plan that are approved by the Kentucky Department of Education after the end of the employee's first month of employment will not affect that employee's evaluations until the following school year.

The board approved its intent to amend an existing regulation to improve the accuracy and reliability of district-level data collection on minority teacher recruitment. The amendments would require districts to disaggregate certain information by ethnic group for their annual reports on minority recruitment. The Kentucky Department of Education will provide a technical assistance guide

to provide specific strategies to districts for improving minority recruitment.

The board also gave final approval to regulations concerning pupil attendance and the Kentucky High School Athletics Association. For more information about these regulations, go to www.kde.state.ky.us/legal/hearings.asp on the Internet.

Public hearings on these and other regulations are scheduled for 10 a.m. on Jan. 26, 2001, in Frankfort. Individuals interested in speaking at the hearing must notify the Department of Education by Jan. 19. To speak at the hearing or submit written comments, contact Kevin M. Noland, Office of Legal Services, Department of Education, 500 Mero St., Frankfort, KY 40601; fax (502) 564-9321.

Accountability issues

The board agreed to drop a specific plan related to student accountability at the high school level. The proposal had sought to incorporate student performance on the Kentucky Core Content Tests in students' grade-point-average calculations. Board members decided there was not enough support among educators, education organizations and the general public to spend more time developing the proposal.

Based on input from various advisory groups, the board directed department staff to pursue a second pilot of the "Model 2" longitudinal project in a selected sample of elementary schools. The pilot will require retesting all 5th-grade students in participating schools in the reading portion of the Kentucky Core Content Tests. Key to the second pilot will be improved communication with participating teachers, focusing on purpose, logistics and instructional strategies.



Photo by Rick McComb

BOOKMARKING — Teachers Jamie Vincent of Ludlow Independent, Vicki Tidwell of Frankfort Independent and Jennifer Wilson of Daviess County were among more than 300 educators who convened in early December to take part in Step Four of a six-step Commonwealth Accountability Testing System standard-setting process. They determined which Kentucky Core Content Tests questions, when correctly answered, would mark the beginning of each of four performance categories.



Commissioner's Comments

Getting to Proficiency by 2014

For all schools to succeed, all students must succeed

By Gene Wilhoit,
Commissioner of Education

Kentucky has built a new and nationally respected system of public education on the premise that all children can learn at high levels. We went to unprecedented lengths to develop programs, school environments, curricula and teaching strategies that would support learning for all students.

Why, then, are some groups of students apparently not learning and achieving at the same high levels as others?

Consider the results of nationally normed CTBS/5 testing at the end of primary and grades 6 and 9 in spring 2000. While high and low scores occur within all groups of students — majority and minority, male and female, different economic and home situations — the group averages indicate disparity. Kentucky's white and Asian students, on average, scored in the nation's top half in reading, language arts and mathematics. The averaged scores of students in other ethnic groups — and in many groups defined by characteristics other than ethnicity — fell in the bottom half.

Gaps show up in scores on state-developed tests, too. Scores in all student population groups went up on

state accountability test results from 1993 to 1998, but gaps continue by race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status and gender.

While we must never allow such categories to limit what we expect of any student, we cannot deny that some groups of students are achieving at lower levels. If all schools are to reach a proficient score of 100 out of 140 in our statewide accountability system by 2014, we must find out why and then find ways to close the gaps.

The Kentucky Board of Education and the Department of Education, working with partners throughout the state, are taking action. Our leadership includes these initiatives to help reduce the achievement gap:

- In 1996, we formed the Kentucky Education Equity Task Force. This body continues to focus on student achievement and other issues of equity in our schools.
- In 1998, we established the Division of Equity, which provides technical assistance, leadership, advocacy, professional development and multicultural education to Kentucky's students, educators and communities.
- In March 2000, we established the Minority Student Achievement Task Force. This body of educators, parents, community leaders and other stakeholders has identified 10 barriers to in-

creased achievement by minority students and developed 10 goals to break those barriers. The task force is working with six high-minority districts to develop, use and evaluate strategies for meeting those goals. (See Page 3.)

- Within Getting to Proficiency, our cross-agency initiative to help all schools reach proficiency by 2014, a 20-person team is analyzing how we work with schools and helping us improve the ways we support all schools in their efforts to close achievement gaps.

- The Commonwealth Accountability Testing System requires schools to reduce the percentage of students in the lowest performance level of novice before being eligible to collect rewards. Scholastic audits of the lowest-performing schools include an analysis of equity and lead to assistance in this and other areas.

- Our Highly Skilled Educator Program and regional service centers concentrate assistance in curriculum and instruction to low-achieving schools. The quest for equity is a strong component of this work.

- When reporting each year's Kentucky Core Content Test results, we provide data that helps every school analyze student performance by subgroups. We're training school personnel to use the data to evaluate and modify their curriculum and instruction to reach all students.

- School and district consolidated plans must address equity in opportunities for learning and the distribution of resources. State and federal agencies can withhold funding to any school that ignores this requirement.

In our laws and regulations, and in our hearts, we Kentuckians have challenged ourselves to see that all children have equal opportunities to learn at high levels. The state board and this department are committed to meeting that challenge. We are teaming up with districts and schools to close the achievement gap, and we pledge our leadership in the effort.

To learn more about the department's equity efforts and resources, visit www.kde.state.ky.us/ohre/equity/ on the Internet. Information is also available from Associate Commissioner Austin Tuning at (502) 564-2703 or atuning@kde.state.ky.us.

To learn more about Getting to Proficiency, go to www.kde.state.ky.us/comm/pubinfo/Kentucky_Teacher/Oct00KYT/Pg2.asp or contact Debbie Schumacher at (502) 564-7056 or dschumac@kde.state.ky.us.

For an online report of gender and race performance gaps on state tests 1993-98, go to www.kde.state.ky.us/comm/commrel/kiris_report_gender_race/.

A Special Note from the Commissioner

There is much to do if all schools are to reach proficiency by 2014. While many challenges deserve our attention, I have directed the Department of Education staff to focus first on three immediate goals:

1. Closing achievement gaps, so that every student, regardless of race, gender, geography, family income or diverse learning need, is achieving at

high levels;

2. Improving literacy, so that every child leaves primary reading at or above grade level;

3. Reducing dropout rates, by ensuring that every student is productively connected and able to succeed in the school community.

These goals are all connected. Students who are able to read are more

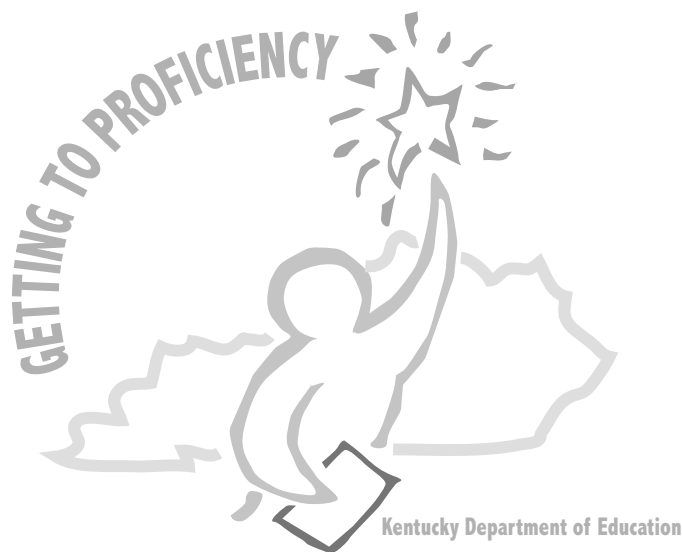
likely to learn. In turn, they are more likely to achieve at high levels and more likely to stay in school and earn a diploma.

In this issue of *Kentucky Teacher*, we launch a series of articles on these three goals and the challenges they present. I hope you will support us in our efforts by sharing your opinions and suggestions with me.

Together, we can ensure that all students succeed.

To comment on these topics, send e-mail to Commissioner Gene Wilhoit at gwilhoit@kde.state.ky.us (or through the KETS global list); mail comments to him at the Kentucky Department of Education, 500 Mero St., Frankfort, KY 40601; or phone (502) 564-3141.

Six districts test strategies for boosting minority student achievement



By
Fran Salyers
Kentucky Department of Education

All eyes are on six Kentucky school districts as they test dozens of strategies for ending disparity in minority student achievement.

Jefferson, Fayette and Hardin county districts and the Bardstown, Owensboro and Paducah independent districts have volunteered to be Kentucky's "Closing the Gap" laboratories. Over the next 18 months or so, they will try various equity strategies, evaluate the results and share their findings with schools statewide.

The equity strategies align with goals established by the Minority Student Achievement Task Force. Established by the Kentucky Department of Education last March (see Page 2), the task force members identified 10 main barriers to African-American student success. They then set 10 goals for breaking those barriers, developed objectives and strategies, and set out to find school districts to put those strategies to the test.

They didn't have to look far. Six district representatives serving on the Minority Student Achievement Task Force volunteered their local schools for the project. Bernard Hamilton, the Department of Education's associate com-

missioner for supportive learning environments, calls the districts "perfect proving grounds" for testing the strategies.

"These six districts have some of the state's highest percentages of minority students, and educators from those districts were serving on the task force because they had a compelling interest in achievement for all," Hamilton said.

The districts will have flexibility in prioritizing the 10 goals.

"Just as every child has individual needs, so do schools and districts," Hamilton said.

The districts are now developing their implementation plans. Once they begin to put those plans into action, the districts will be comparing notes and making adjustments as necessary. After 18 to 24 months, the task force will collect data from the six districts, identify the strategies that got the best results and distribute the information to all districts.

While achievement gaps are prevalent nationwide, Hamilton said he knows of only two states that are piloting gap-closing strategies in a concentrated way. Those states are North Carolina and Kentucky.

"I think many states will be watching us on this, because eliminating the

Goals in the Quest for Equity

After identifying 10 main barriers to high academic achievement by African-American students, the Kentucky Department of Education's Minority Student Achievement Task Force (see "Commissioner's Comments" on Page 2) set 10 goals to break those barriers. Six districts are testing strategies for meeting these goals.

While the task force's original mission was to address the achievement gap between white and African-American students, its members recognized early in the process that gaps also pertain to groups identified by gender, economics, disabilities and other diverse learning needs. They intend for the 10 goals to extend to other groups and meet the needs of all students.

Goal 1: All students in the commonwealth, regardless of race, gender, ethnic background or socioeconomic status, will have access to a rigorous curriculum and have support systems in place to ensure success in a rigorous curriculum.

Goal 2: Kentucky's education accountability system will include and involve all stakeholders and provide incentives to ensure minority achievement.

Goal 3: Minority students are to be recognized as high-achieving learners.

Goal 4: Communities (school boards and staffs, students, parents, business leaders, religious leaders and adults without school-age children) will have opportunities, motivations and tools to develop and face issues of race and achievement.

Goal 5: All districts and schools will develop environments that result in respect of cultural and socioeconomic differences.

Goal 6: Students, teachers, counselors, administrators and parents must believe in high expectations for all students.

Goal 7: All pre-service, new and experienced teachers will have opportunities to expand their knowledge and skills in reaching minority students in ways that ensure high achievement for all students.

Goal 8: Educators will effectively use data to improve the educational achievement of all students.

Goal 9: Believing that all students can learn and that there are "no excuses," all educators will take ownership to ensure that all students are challenged and motivated to achieve at high levels.

Goal 10: Because it is important that all students benefit from diverse experiences and that our schools represent the richness of America's cultural diversity, all districts will show annually an increase in the diversity of staff. By 2004, staff in all school districts will be in proportion with the number of minorities within the student population.

achievement gap is important to every state, community and person in the nation," he said. "Here in Kentucky, closing the gap is especially significant. We cannot reach proficiency unless we do so."

For more information, go to www.kde.state.ky.us/ohre/equity on the Internet or contact Bernard Hamilton at (502) 564-3301 or bhamilto@kde.state.ky.us.

Your students don't want to read? Try the workshop approach!

By Jackie Bretz
Kentucky Department of Education

Editor's Note: Career educator Jackie Bretz is a language arts specialist for the department's Regional Service Center 2 in Bowling Green.



Jackie Bretz

"My kids don't want to read. Nothing I try seems to work."

How many times have you said or thought that about your students? You're not alone. Many middle-grade and high school teachers find that when it comes to reading, students begrudgingly do their assignments, their efforts producing only a superficial understanding of the text. As one teacher aptly said, the information goes "in one eye and out the other."

One good way to find some insight into this dilemma is to look at yourself as a reader. We all have needs that must be met before we read. Priorities for active reading might include a text that reflects your reading ability and interests, comfortable surroundings, a purpose for reading and time to read.

Students have similar priorities for active reading. Although not all needs can be met in the classroom setting, many can be addressed through reading workshops that focus on individual student work. In a workshop setting, students select their own texts and read at their own speed toward a teacher-determined deadline. Students usually write responses to the texts when they finish reading.

Literature circles

Most of us don't want to just read something; we also want to talk about it. Teachers can easily broaden the workshop framework into a small-group strategy to meet that need. One such strategy is the literature circle.

Literature circles aren't new, but educators are rediscovering how the circles can accommodate diverse learning styles and motivational levels.

Traditionally thought of as a strategy for 4th through 6th grades, literature circles also work in the middle grades. Dina Harper, language arts teacher at Todd County Middle School, successfully uses literature circles in her collaborative 8th-grade English class. Her students read the short story "Raymond's Run" employing a variety of methods, including teacher read-aloud. They met in assigned groups of four to six and published their observations about the book on giant sheets of paper placed on the classroom walls.

"I love the variation that the circles give to the traditional approach of 'read a story and answer the questions,'" Harper said. "Students are more thoroughly involved in reading because they have a 'mission' to complete. ... They are more aware of a story's details on their first time read-through."

Teachers from other Kentucky schools use literature circles in content areas as well. Social studies teachers assign historical fiction and biographies to increase students' comprehension of people, cultures and events.

Experienced reading teachers such as Edith Mariani of Highlands Middle School in Fort Thomas have learned some specific ways to incorporate literature circles. One method is to color-key the groups' folders (see box) so teachers can identify circle work at a glance. Another is to audiotape group discussions for later evaluation.

To accommodate all learners and ability levels, make multiple copies of books available for students to check out and take home. Recorded books can provide scaffolding for emerging readers.

Mariani also recommends requiring each student to complete an individual task after the literature circle book is read. These book-based activities could include writing a letter to the author, drawing a mural or a Venn diagram, creating a board game or writing song lyrics.

Mariani knows first hand the power of using literature circles. "The good readers get better," she says. "The others benefit from having a strong peer role model. That makes them want to read."



Photo by Rick McComb

Pamela Poindexter (left) and Natalie Turner share their perceptions of "The Giver," a book chosen by their literature circle at Highland Middle School. Teachers there and in other schools have found that the "circle" approach can boost reading skills by accommodating diverse learning styles and motivational levels.

A reading workshop approach isn't the answer for every classroom, but it can be a meaningful part of the reading comprehension puzzle when it comes to motivating and getting students to proficiency.

"Literature Circles: Voice and Choice in the Student-Centered Classroom" by Harvey Daniels, or go to www.literaturecircles.com on the Internet. To contact Bretz, phone (270) 746-7063 or send e-mail through the KETS global listing or to jbretz@kde.state.ky.us.

NOTE: Jackie Bretz suggests reading

Essential Features of Literature Circles

- Each circle group includes four to six members grouped randomly or by the teacher.
- All members of a circle read the same book or text, preferably one selected by the group.
- Circle members decide at what rate to read the book or text to meet the teacher's target date for completion.
- The teacher provides job assignment sheets for each circle. Job assignments within a fiction circle might include discussion director, literary luminary, vocabulary enricher, summarizer, travel tracer, illustrator, connector and investigator. Nonfiction circle assignments might include discussion director, passage master, vocabulary enricher, illustrator and connector.
- Groups meet regularly with jobs rotating after each meeting.
- Each circle keeps a folder or uses some other method for collecting reports of pages read, job assignments, results of discussions and job completion forms.
- Teachers grade groups and individuals on effort and performance of job tasks at each circle meeting. A "presentation" grade is given after the book is read and tasks are completed.

Community business connection gives Oldham students real-life, global experiences

By Faun S. Fishback
Kentucky Department of Education

Fifth-grade students in three Oldham County schools took a field trip to Germany this fall without leaving their classrooms. Through a rather unique — and quite accidental — community connection, the students traveled across Holland, Germany, Austria and the Czech Republic with the owners and two employees of The Treasured Child, a toy store in LaGrange.

As the four adults traveled from country to country, they kept the Oldham County students in their hearts and on their minds. “Anytime anyone started to throw something interesting away, I’d grab it for the students,” said store employee Bettie Beck as she fascinated students with the toothpaste-like tubes of mustard and horseradish she brought back.

The trip was Beck’s first to Europe. “I was learning like a child,” she said. “It was all new and exciting.”

This “accidental” community connection came about at the start of school when David Thurmond, the district’s instructional coordinator, learned about the European buying trip during a visit to the toy store. He mentioned to Beck that it would be a great experience for students to be involved somehow in the trip. Shop owners Trish and Rick Garlock agreed.

Thurmond let the county elementary schools know the opportunity was available. Teachers at Buckner, Crestwood and Goshen elementaries took it from there. When the Garlocks, Beck and Faith Brush left for their two-week European buying trip in late September, they took with them questions from students in five Oldham County classrooms. Most of the questions were about European culture, money, geography, language and architecture.

At stops throughout the four European countries, the foursome sent postcards back to each classroom. They took photographs of three dolls and a bear that traveled with them to show students the different sites they saw. “It was just amazing all these four people did for us while they were traveling,” said 5th-grade Buckner Elementary teacher Amy Malcolm.

Even though The Treasured Child quartet was on a business trip, they found it easy to be the eyes and ears of the Oldham County students while traveling. “We hope this gives the students an awareness of other countries,” Trish Garlock said. Both she and Beck said they saw that many things they experienced on their trip — different languages, different money rates, different cultures — could easily be related to classroom activities for the students.

After purchases from the buying

trip began arriving at the store in November, the Garlocks and Beck visited each classroom for show and tell. They brought packets of photos showing everything from 1,100-year-old walled cities to doll factories and the world’s largest and smallest nutcrackers. They shared menus written in German, coins from every country they visited, receipts for purchases and, of course, some of the toys they bought for their store.

Beck, dressed in some native Bavarian clothing, and Trish Garlock answered questions students had asked them to find out while in Europe:

- Yes, there are Harry Potter books in Germany.
- There aren’t many malls. There are movie theaters, but they are called cinemas.
- European children play a lot of soccer, but in Germany it’s called füssball. (Füss in German means foot.)

Trish Garlock told the students about many of the items they bought. She displayed dolls purchased from the same toy maker: an affordable baby doll and a collectible doll with human hair and delicate, handpainted features. She used the dolls to illustrate the range of craftsmanship one company offers and to show the decisions business owners must make when buying for their stores.

Rick Garlock told the students about their challenges with exchanging American currency for foreign bills and coins. Since he and his wife lived and worked in Europe for six years, he had experience with exchange rates. He explained how the rates fluctuated daily and how that affected what they bought. He also told the students how packing and shipping charges entered into decisions on what toys to buy.

It was a power-packed visit from The Treasured Child staff. In a short time, students learned about different cultures, foreign currency, how toys are manufactured, the basics of retail buying, foreign foods and even a few foreign phrases. The trip offered the students many connections to core content.

Malcolm plans to use materials and information from the toy sellers’ trip as part of an economics unit with her Buckner Elementary 5th-graders this spring. Students will have the benefit of already hearing about how business people make decisions, deal with different currencies and do business in different cultures, she said. She also sees applications from the trip to mathematics, geography, and arts and humanities content.

When the economics unit begins next March, will the students remember what they heard in November? “Definitely,” said 5th-grader Katie Kent. “It’s hard to forget something so exciting!”



Buckner Elementary 5th-graders seem spellbound as toy store employee Bettie Beck, dressed in Bavarian clothing, shares photos from her buying trip to Europe. Through collaboration between the store and teachers at three Oldham County schools, the trip became a learning experience for students.

Photo by Faun S. Fishback

These Carroll County students mean business!

By Sharon Crouch Farmer
Kentucky Department of Education

In this Carroll County classroom, the dress is corporate and there is a quiet intensity as students go about their work. The atmosphere is that of an office, and the students are getting down to business.

Specialized Printing in an Educational Classroom Setting — SPECS — is more than just reading about the business world. Cathy Foisel's classroom at the Carroll County Area Technology Center is the hub for this student-operated design, printing and distribution company. Foisel serves as the CEO and faculty adviser, but "the students do it all," she said. "They meet with clients, set up budgets, prioritize jobs and ensure that the jobs are completed professionally."

SPECS was organized in 1998 when a local agency asked the class to print a brochure. The students declined the job at first because they did not have a printer. "Three local companies — Dow Corning, ATOFINA and North American Stainless — got involved and donated a refurbished color copier, and we were able to finally print that brochure," Foisel said.

Dow Corning representative Jennifer Johnson took Foisel and a group of her students to several printing companies to get ideas and support for the program, which serves as Carroll County's Student Technology Leadership Program. Students in grades 10 through 12 interview to be in the class and must have completed three prerequisites — Introduction to Computers, Word Processing I and Word Processing II — or have approval from Foisel. Every nine weeks, the students rotate among seven company positions: public relations representative, layout and design coordinator, technical coordinator, accounting manager, office assistant, Web site designer and equipment technician. One student usually holds the job of office manager for an entire semester to provide continuity.

Joshua Jones, this semester's SPECS office manager, keeps jobs organized and supports all other staff members. "We each have tasks to complete, deadlines to meet, clients to

serve and priorities to juggle," Jones said. He leads staff meetings each Monday and Thursday to keep everyone up to date on company commitments.

"We have a lot of responsibility and are learning a lot of lessons — and not just about business and careers," he said. "We are learning to take responsibility, work with people of different ages and backgrounds, and how to plan work around other commitments like school and chores at home."

Students meet with potential clients to discuss jobs and set up a production schedule that will meet the client's deadline. They draw up a bid based on materials costs. Any extra money they make goes into the program to support maintenance on the copier.

The SPECS team does a lot of work for a local Dow Corning Corporation facility, including the design, printing

and mailing of a quarterly newsletter. "The SPECS students have done a broad range of projects for us," said Dow Corning's Johnson. "They offer a valuable service to our company."

Foisel has no true handbook for the class, choosing instead to use Stephen Covey's "Seven Habits of Highly Effective People" and the Franklin/Covey Planner. Students keep both a class portfolio and a personal portfolio that also can be used in the Cooperative Education Program.

"These students won't all enter the printing field, but they will have a little jump-start on any career track," Foisel said.

For more information, phone Cathy Foisel at the Carroll County Area Technology Center at (502) 732-4479 or send e-mail to her through the KETS global list or to cfoisel@carroll.k12.ky.us.



Photo by Rick McComb

Lacey Goode, a senior at Carroll County Area Technology Center, proofs a newsletter her school's Student Technology Leadership Program is developing for a local business. Students gain business-world experience by operating their own publication design, print and distribution company.

SPECS works in many ways

Carolyn Barnes, principal of Carroll County Area Technology Center until this year, witnessed first-hand the impact of the Specialized Printing in an Educational Classroom Setting program. She shared the following observations.

- Self-esteem is one of the greatest rewards of the class for all students. Open dialogue at staff meetings and opportunities to work together to solve problems feed their confidence. Students have permission to try, fail and try again until the job is done accurately and to the customer's satisfaction.

- Students normally have the chance to build relationships within the school community, but here there are numerous opportunities to build relationships beyond the classroom and campus and extending into industry and the entire community.

- A good foundation is laid for the transition from school-to-work. This professional environment with professional expectations prepares students for future growth toward a successful career.

- All of the skills so revered in a business environment — problem solving, communication, teamwork, attitude and dependability — are obvious in the SPECS classroom.

- Students learn about deadlines, respect and dependence on each other, and the stresses and frustrations that exist in the business environment. More importantly, they learn about themselves. They learn that, given the opportunity and freedom to offer each of their own unique talents to this class, outstanding work can be accomplished — work that is good enough to be accepted and applauded by major business and industry throughout the community.

How can I use the Web in my classroom?

By Fran Salyers
Kentucky Department of Education

Welcome back to New to the 'Net. If you have completed the first four lessons, you're probably eager to put the Web to work in your classroom. This lesson introduces some online resources you can use to extend your teaching — no matter what your content area — and get your students excited about learning in new ways.

In this lesson . . .

- Take your students virtually anywhere in the world.
- Link your students to experts who will answer their questions.
- Find out how high school students can take courses they can't take at your school.
- Compare the pros and cons of using computers in your classroom or in the computer lab.
- Use the Web to extend a lesson you've already planned.

To locate Lesson 5 online, select the New to the 'Net main page in your bookmarks list, or go to the Kentucky Department of Education's home page (www.kde.state.ky.us) and click on the mascot "Newt," then click on the Lesson 5 link.

Virtual Field Trips

Wouldn't it be great to take your students to the White House when they're learning about U.S. presidents? To Ancient Rome to learn about Caesar's Empire? To Mars during lessons about the planets? To the Metropolitan Museum of Art to see great masterpieces?

You can — and without getting field trip permission slips or reserving a bus! From New to the 'Net's Lesson 5 page, click on "Virtual Field Trips." You'll find electronic passports to take your students anywhere in the universe.

Ask an Expert

Bringing local professionals and craftspeople into your classroom is a tried-and-true way to expose students

to real-world expertise. Now you can expand that opportunity by using the Web to connect your students to experts ranging from astronauts to zookeepers.

On the Lesson 5 page, click on "Ask an Expert" to see how students can get information from specialists who answer their questions. Consider bookmarking your favorite "ask" sites. Some of them are great for helping students learn

credit short of qualifying to graduate with her class. She needs a health course that your school offers at the same time she must take another required course.

Scenario 3: Several students in your school want to earn Commonwealth Diplomas. Your school does not offer the required courses.

The solution to those dilemmas — and many others —



about careers, too.

Online Courses

Scenario 1: Several students in your class want to take Advanced Placement courses next year. Your school doesn't offer the courses these students want and need.

Scenario 2: A high school senior, through no fault of her own, is a half-

could be Kentucky Virtual High School. Students take courses online, at times convenient to them, from Kentucky-certified teachers, to earn high school or dual high school-college credit.

To learn more, click on the Kentucky Virtual High School link on the Lesson 5 page. Go there anytime through the KVHS icon on the Department of Education's home page.

Classroom vs. Lab

Some schools install all or most of their networked computers in a lab. Others install them in classrooms. Which is more effective for teaching and learning? Click on "Classroom vs. Lab" on the Lesson 5 page for a comparison of these two options.

Making It Work

On the Lesson 5 page, click on "Put the Web to Work" and follow the outline to incorporate a virtual field trip or Web tour into a learning unit you plan to teach during February. Once you've seen the power it can have on teaching and learning, you're likely to use the Web often.

Reflect

This lesson covered several options for using the Web as an instructional tool. What did you learn that you can use in your classroom right away? Click on the "Reflect" link on the Lesson 5 page and answer the questions there. Documenting your answers could be useful if you are taking this online course for professional development credit.

Send comments and questions to your New to the 'Net mentor, Naomi Cornette, by e-mail at ncornett@kde.state.ky.us (or through the KETS global list) or by phone at (502) 564-7168 or (800) 533-5372.

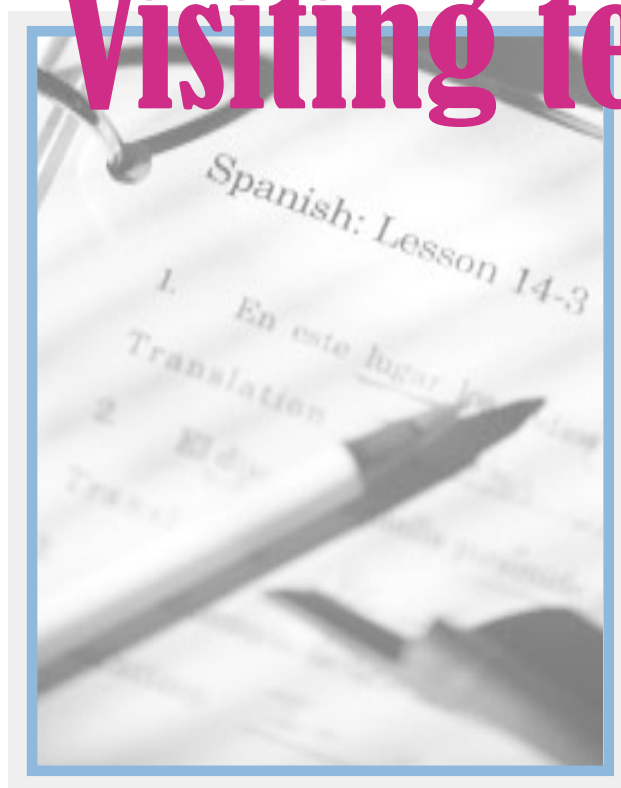
Coming in February

New to the 'Net Lesson 6, The Web's Impact on Student Learning, will feature these topics:

- Project-based learning: What it is; how and why it works
- Favorite sites: More teacher-recommended resources

New to the 'Net started in the August issue of *Kentucky Teacher*. If you have questions about the series or need copies of Lessons 1-4, go to www.kde.state.ky.us on the Internet and click on Newt, the course mascot, or send a request to *Kentucky Teacher*, 1914 Capital Plaza Tower, 500 Mero St., Frankfort, KY 40601; kyteacher@kde.state.ky.us.

Visiting teachers provide authentic



By **Faun S. Fishback**
Kentucky Department of Education

Students in nine Kentucky districts are learning Spanish this year because native Spanish-speaking teachers have come all the way from Spain to share their language with them.

The Kentucky/Spain Visiting Teachers Program identifies native-speaking Spanish teachers who are interested in living and teaching in Kentucky. It matches them to Kentucky schools and districts that need teachers for their foreign language classrooms.

The visiting teachers program, now in its first year, has been a "lifesaver" to participating high schools, principals say, because there were not enough qualified applicants to fill vacant Spanish teacher positions. The program has also enabled schools in several districts to offer a foreign language at the elementary and middle school levels, a vital ingredient of initiatives based on brain research.

Being able to offer Spanish instruction is a benefit that far outweighs the extra responsibility, time

and effort it takes to bring teachers from a foreign country into Kentucky communities, say the administrators of participating schools. In most instances, active and retired Spanish teachers have helped the visiting teachers adjust to their new homes and school routines. Community leaders and church groups also welcomed the visiting teachers.

Here's what administrators in seven of the nine participating districts say about having visiting teachers.

Barren County

Barren County High School, with 1,135 students, offers four levels of French and Spanish and three levels of German. When no suitable replacement for a retiring Spanish teacher could be found, the school's short-term solution was to hire Maria del Van Martin.

Spanish teacher Sharon Mattingly is del Van Martin's mentor. "The time a teacher consumes helping the foreign teacher is extensive," said Principal Glenn Flanders. "This is more than just a new teacher on your staff. A lot of planning and time is involved to make the teacher feel welcome and

comfortable in the school, community and classroom."

Casey County

Since hiring Ruth Yanez through the visiting teacher program, Casey County High School Principal Don Cravens says he hasn't looked back. "For students, this really adds credibility to learning the language," Cravens said. "It makes it more realistic to them." The school of 750 students also offers French.

Students have responded well to Yanez, and teachers have helped her during the adjustment period. A retired Spanish teacher and people in the community helped Yanez find housing and a car.

Cumberland County

"We needed a Spanish teacher but could not get any applicants," said Cumberland County High School Principal Anthony Ballou. "I don't know what I would have done had we not gotten Belen Lopez." In addition to teaching foreign language classes, Lopez also coaches high school and middle school girls' athletic teams.

Ballou says the biggest drawback to the visiting teacher program is the uncertainty of knowing if the participating teacher will want to stay beyond the initial one-year contract. Consequently, he continues to look for teacher applicants to keep Spanish available to the school's 322 students.

Elizabethtown Independent

When Elizabethtown Independent schools looked for a Spanish teacher to support a new districtwide program centered on brain research, there were no takers. The visiting teacher program was the natural solution for providing foreign language instruction to elementary students and preschoolers, said Carl Stoltzfus, assistant superintendent for instruction.

Socorro Gomez teaches about 60

15-minute lessons each week at three different schools. She teaches the regular classroom teachers along with the students so they will be able to reinforce the language in other content areas. (See "Teacher travels from Madrid ...".)

Jackson Independent

Jackson Independent schools value second-language learning. Superintendent Taylor Collins has supported the district's language program by teaching high school Spanish for eight years. Two years ago, he introduced Spanish in the elementary grades to give the district's 448 students access to the language.

This school year, visiting teacher Estefania Ortega has added a new dimension to the district's language program. She speaks Spanish, English and French. This is the first time in many years the school has offered French, said Tim Spencer, elementary and high school principal. Collins continues to teach Spanish III so that Ortega can offer a French class.

Ortega's contract is for one year. "We hope she will stay longer," Spencer said. "If she does not, then we hope to get a new teacher from Spain."

McCreary County

"We had looked at research showing that exposure to a foreign language may contribute to increased achievement with our own language," said Whitley City Middle School Principal Eugenia Jones. Hiring Lourdes Santana has allowed the school to begin exploratory classes in Spanish for its 405 students.

Jones said the school and Santana experienced many of the initial difficulties others experience with trying to get the new teacher settled into the community. "It requires more effort to make the teacher feel comfortable," she said. "However, the benefits far outweigh any drawbacks. This exposure to a different culture has been an interesting experience for our students and faculty."

ntic voices to Spanish instruction

Muhlenberg County

Muhlenberg South High School jumped into the visiting teachers program just two weeks before school started when one of the school's Spanish teachers decided not to return. It took about six weeks to get Gema Fouce to Kentucky and into the classroom. Because of that experience,

Principal Jerry Oates advises schools to start as early as possible to hire a visiting teacher. Fouce had to adjust quickly to her new surroundings while trying to learn class schedules, grading, lesson plans and other parts of the school routine, Oates said.

"Participating in the program has been a good fix," he added. "She has really helped our school."

Teacher travels from Madrid to help local elementaries

Editor's Note: This story is condensed from an article published in the Aug. 30, 2000, issue of The News-Enterprise, Elizabethtown, Ky. It is reprinted with permission. Photo by LeeAnn Seymour.



Socorro Gomez pantomimes to help primary students understand the Spanish word *niña*.

Chatter in the halls of Morningside and Helmwood elementary schools has taken on an international ring. High-pitched cries of "Hola!" and "Muy bien" echo through the halls, especially when Spanish teacher Socorro Gomez is there to wave to students.

One of the new courses introduced by Elizabethtown Independent Schools this year to improve learning brought the 28-year-old Gomez from Madrid, Spain, to share her native language with students in kindergarten through 3rd grade.

Four days a week, Gomez rotates through classes at the two elementary schools. She gives each class a pair of 15-minute sessions per week.

In some of her first lessons at Morningside Elementary, Gomez spoke only Spanish to the students but added acting and pantomime to help the students understand. To teach them how to say "I am a boy" or "I am a girl" in Spanish, she drew stick figures, one without hair and one with a skirt and pigtails. She labeled them "un niño" and "una niña."

Gomez acted out the statements, speaking in a low voice when she said, "Yo soy un niño" and in a high voice when she said, "Yo soy una niña."

Gomez walked down the rows of the classroom, gently touching each student's head and calling out "niño" or "niña." She tossed an inflated ball with the Spanish words for "What are you?" on it and had each child catch the ball and practice the appropriate answer.

"I love to perform, and I know children like it, so I do it," Gomez said. "I just want the children to love Spanish. If you have a feeling, a love for a language, at the beginning, then you will do what is necessary to learn it. That's important when you learn a language."

Act now to hire a visiting teacher for 2001-02

All schools and districts interested in hiring Spanish teachers through the Kentucky/Spain Visiting Teachers Program have until March 1, 2001, to declare their needs.

This year, the program focused on hiring teachers certified in second-language instruction to teach Spanish. However, says Kentucky Department of Education foreign language consultant Jacque Van Houten, the program also can link schools with teachers from Spain who are certified in other content areas.

Based on the number of visiting teachers needed, Van Houten will work with the Ministry of Education and Culture of Spain to find prospective teachers, interview candidates in Spain, and select teachers to fit the needs of applicant schools. School administrators will receive information about the candidates so they can interview them by phone before recommending the candidate to their school councils.

A week-long orientation program scheduled for July 22-27, 2001, will help the newly arrived Spanish teachers get acquainted with living and teaching in Kentucky. Schools need to act quickly this spring so the hired teachers can complete visa requirements and arrive in time to attend the orientation.

Participating schools are responsible for the following:

- Finding a host family or other housing for the teacher;
- Helping the teacher open a bank account, secure a Kentucky driver's license, purchase or lease a car and obtain insurance, and become familiar with the town;
- Assigning a mentor teacher to help the visiting teacher learn the school's layout, and act as liaison with the teacher, the district office and the Department of Education.

If the visiting teacher arrives in Kentucky after the orientation week, the school must also help the teacher secure a Social Security card.

To receive more information, contact Jacque Van Houten at (502) 564-2106 or by e-mail at jvanhout@kde.state.ky.us, or through the KETS global list.

Watch future issues of *Kentucky Teacher* for information about new partnerships with the Embassy of France and the German Checkpoint Charlie Foundation to enhance

French and German programs in Kentucky's schools.

To get details about another option for solving the foreign language teacher shortage, go to www.kvhs.org, the Web home page for the Kentucky Virtual High School.



Photo by Rick McComb

Estefania Ortega Gonzalez, a visiting teacher from Spain, answers a question from students Amber Combs and Meggan Blake at Jackson High School.

Brodhead Elementary tackled reform a year at a time. Now it leads the way.

Teachers and staff understand that all students can learn but not all the same way. Such thinking has put Brodhead students in the top 3 percent in the state academically.

By Jim Parks
Kentucky Department of Education

Editor's Note: April 11, 2000, was the 10th anniversary of the signing of the Kentucky Education Reform Act. To mark the occasion, the Kentucky Department of Education published a comprehensive report, "Results Matter: A Decade of Difference in Kentucky's Public Schools." Brodhead Elementary is one of 12 schools profiled in that report. These 12 schools are examples of successes happening in many schools — and inspiration for schools still looking for the keys to future success.

In 1989, Brodhead Elementary School assistant principal Mike McKinney carefully followed the work of the Kentucky Task Force on Education Reform. As each of the reform recommendations emerged, McKinney liked what he saw.

The next year, as Brodhead's principal, he got his opportunity to tackle reform head on and hands on. He guided the school in a long-term plan that stretched reform implementation over six to seven years. By 1999, the school's 500 students were among the state's top performers.

Using traditional indicators, the town of Brodhead may not be the first place you might look for such high achievement. Located halfway between Crab Orchard and Mount Vernon in Rockcastle County, Brodhead (population 1,200) was once a thriving railroad town. Those jobs are gone now, and the parents of Brodhead students work in factories as far away as Lexington and Georgetown. More than half the students qualify for free or reduced price lunches.

McKinney retired at the end of the 1999-2000 school year. Caroline Graves, a teacher at Brodhead for 11 years, has taken the helm and continues McKinney's team

approach. Shared decision making and consensus are pervasive at the school.

Gone is the notion that some people are more important than others in supporting student success. Teams tackle every challenge and initiative. Teachers teach in teams of two, and each team has an instructional aide. Teachers have 30 minutes of planning time every day while aides take students to the playground or the gym. Teachers help out in the cafeteria at times, and food service people help in classrooms. Parents serve on the school council and participate in all aspects of the school. For four years in a row, every student has been represented by a parent or guardian in teacher conferences.

The teamwork approach has

fostered an atmosphere of cooperation and trust, which empowers people to try new things. At Brodhead, it is okay to fail in the quest for improvement.

Early in the reform process, the school adopted new perceptions about how people learn. It adopted new ways to teach students — and teachers. Sending teachers off to conferences for professional development wasn't working. Instead, the school brought experts to Brodhead to work with the whole staff on specific priorities, especially writing and reading.

"We believe ALL children and adults can learn," Graves said. "We believe they learn in millions of ways, and we strive to make sure that we present multiple ways to learn." In fact, she said, a new school now under

construction will, by design, support varied styles of teaching and learning.

"We keep standards and expectations high," said Brodhead teacher Susan Coffey. She and others focus on what they described as "meaningful, purposeful" learning.

Teacher Cathy Dyehouse says everyone at the school believes in the students, staff and programs and understands that "all kids can learn, but not all learn the same way." Such thinking has put Brodhead students in the top 3 percent in the state academically. The school's scores in reading, mathematics and writing — all in the high 80s and low 90s — are within striking distance of the state goal of 100 by the year 2014. Ways to raise performance in other areas have been implemented or are on the drawing board.

For more information about Brodhead Elementary's success, contact the principal, Caroline Graves, at (606) 758-8512 or cgraves@rockcastle.k12.ky.us (or through the KETS global list).

The print edition of "Results Matter: A Decade of Difference in Kentucky's Public Schools" is available for \$15 per copy. To order, phone Windy Newton at (502) 564-3421; send e-mail to wnewton@kde.state.ky.us; or write to the Department of Education Bookstore, 19th Floor, Capital Plaza Tower, 500 Mero St., Frankfort, KY 40601. To order online, go to www.kde.state.ky.us/comm/pubinfo/bookstore/ (click "Browse and Order Online," then "Education Reform.")

The report is available free of charge on the Internet at www.kde.state.ky.us/resultsmatter.



Christopher Scalf and Margie Bishop share a big book during reading time at Brodhead Elementary. Special education instructional assistant Gloria Seals (top of page) helps Corey Frederick with mathematics skills.

Photo by Rick McComb

Wilhoit hears from 700 Kentuckians in forum series

When Gene Wilhoit became Kentucky's education commissioner in early September, he wanted to know what educators, parents and others were thinking about education. He spent November finding out by taking a tour that he said would be the first of many visits to schools, districts and communities throughout the state.

Wilhoit hosted eight public forums in communities from Murray to Pikeville. Almost 700 teachers, school administrators, parents, students and other citizens signed in to participate, and dozens more attended.

"It was exciting to see such diverse groups of people at these forums, all focused on the topic of education for the children of Kentucky," Wilhoit said after the final event in Ashland on Nov. 30. He reported to the Kentucky Board of Education on Dec. 5 that some comments were consistent in all areas of the state.

"Parents were a small but vocal group, and their messages were loud and clear," Wilhoit said. "They want to be more directly involved with their children's schools, and they want schools to welcome them and show them how they can make a difference. They want schools to show them how to be partners in their children's learning — things as basic as how to help with homework — and they want schools to communicate with them in language they can understand."

Wilhoit reported that comments from teachers were more varied. "Some told me they were overwhelmed with too much paperwork, too much pressure, too little time. Others said that reform has brought the most exciting and productive times of their careers," he said.

During a break in the state board meeting, Wilhoit said that such wide variances in attitudes and experiences probably point to differences in leadership and teacher support. "That's something we need to look at," he said.

Wilhoit said he was pleased that educators made positive comments about scholastic audits and reviews of low-performing schools. "By law, the department must send a team into those schools to help local educators look at everything they do and find out why students are not doing well on state core



Photo by Rick McComb

Education Commissioner Gene Wilhoit listens to a comment during a public forum in Lexington. Almost 700 educators, parents, students and other citizens signed in at forums held in eight locations in November. Dozens more attended to listen to Wilhoit's responses to education questions and issues.

content tests," he said. "Administrators and teachers could have had a negative view of these audits, but I heard from many who found the audit process and results to be positive and constructive. This speaks well of the audit teams and the schools they worked to assist."

At each forum, Wilhoit briefly presented his immediate priorities — equity, dropout prevention and literacy (see Page 2 in this issue) — plus three long-term concerns: boosting teacher quality, recruiting and training school leaders and building school environments that are supportive of children. He then opened the floor to discussion. Participants raised a wide range of topics:

- Teacher issues — teacher quality, shortages, recruitment, salary, preparation, retirement, class size;
- Parent issues — involvement, getting information about school programs and student progress, ways to help students succeed;
- Primary program — a need for more teacher training in working in multiage, multiability classrooms;
- Testing and accountability — testing students for whom English is a second language, student motivation and accountability, longitudinal studies (measuring the progress made as groups of students move from grade to

grade), increasing the details available from state core content test results;

- Curriculum issues, especially those related to foreign languages and reading;

- English as a second language issues — assessment challenges, needs for new initiatives and student support;

- Dropout issues — the need for strategies to keep students in school until they earn diplomas;

- Gifted/talented issues — funding, Advanced Placement classes; meeting needs through the Kentucky Virtual High School;

- Leadership at the district and school levels;

- Middle schools — strategies for improving student achievement;

- Technology — funding and applications for instruction.

Wilhoit returned from the eight forums with more than 300 written evaluation forms. On those forms, 98 percent of participants said the forums were "very" or "somewhat" informative, and 99 percent said the commissioner was responsive to their questions and concerns.

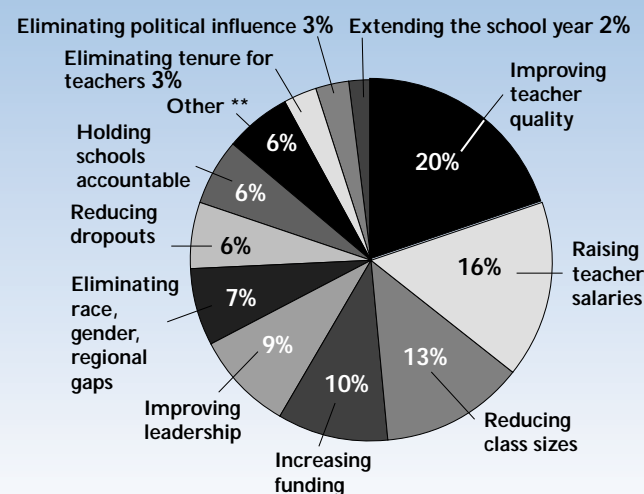
"I got the message that people want us — the Department of Education — to come back again and listen to their concerns and ideas," Wilhoit said. "We'll be working on a way to do that. We're talking about public education, and I'm dedicated to including the public in our policy-making process."

For more information about the forums, contact Associate Commissioner Hunt Helm at (502) 564-3421 or hhelm@kde.state.ky.us.

What are Kentucky's education priorities?

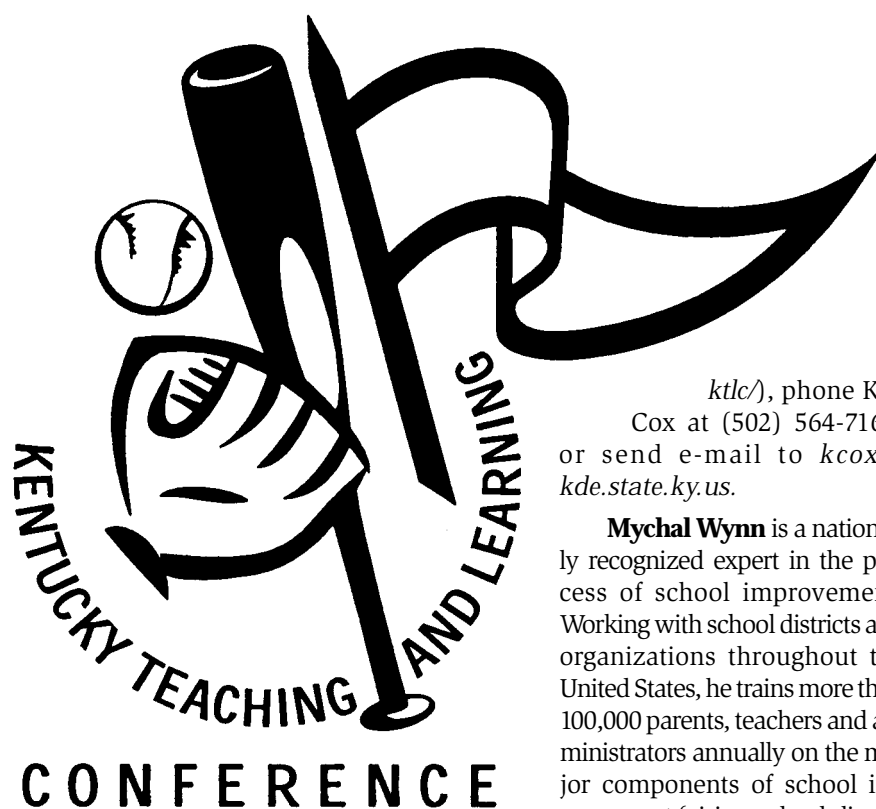
At eight public forums, Education Commissioner Gene Wilhoit asked participants to identify the education priorities that were most important to them. Here is what 631 people told him.

Percentage* of responses ranking issues in the top three in importance.



* Percentages do not equal 100 because of rounding. ** "Other" included 35 wide-ranging topics. For a complete list, see www.kde.state.ky.us/comm/commrel/forums on the Internet or request a printed copy from Pam Clemons at (502) 564-3421 or pclemons@kde.state.ky.us

Nationally acclaimed speakers coming to Kentucky



The 2001 Kentucky Teaching and Learning Conference will bring some "heavy hitters" to Louisville to present sessions for educators at every grade level and content area. On the agenda are some of the nation's most respected authorities in brain research, curriculum, environmental education, closing achievement gaps and using multimedia for project-based learning.

The conference annually brings educators and students together to focus on improving instruction and boosting student achievement. This year's event is set for March 8-10, 2001, at the Kentucky International Convention Center in Louisville. Sponsors include the Kentucky Department of Education, Jefferson County Public Schools, Kentucky Educational Technology System vendors and other partners.

On this page are the names of a few of the featured presenters. For more information about presenters, sessions and registration options, watch for frequent updates on the conference Web site (www.kde.state.ky.us/oet/customer/

ktlc/), phone Kay Cox at (502) 564-7168, or send e-mail to kcox@kde.state.ky.us.

Mychal Wynn is a nationally recognized expert in the process of school improvement. Working with school districts and organizations throughout the United States, he trains more than 100,000 parents, teachers and administrators annually on the major components of school improvement (vision, school climate and culture, curriculum and instruction). Check these Web sites

for more information: www.rspublishing.com/MychalWynnVita.html and www.rspublishing.com/ChangeContinuum.html.

David A. Sousa is an international educational consultant and author. His popular book, "How the Brain Learns," explains the latest research on learning and translates it into practical and effective classroom strategies. At conferences throughout North America and Europe, he conducts workshops on brain research, instructional skills, supervision and science education.

Ted Hasselbring is the William T. Bryan Professor of Special Education Technology at the University of Kentucky. Over the past 20

years he has conducted research on the use of technology for enhancing learning in students with mild disabilities and those who are at risk of school failure. At the conference, he will discuss low-cost instructional software designed to help students with special needs overcome every-day challenges in decoding, spelling and reading connected text. He will discuss software features that help students with learning problems become successful learners.

Bernie Dodge is the "father" of the WebQuest approach to structured online learning. His conference session and workshop topics will include inquiry-oriented activities, finding raw materials for WebQuests, using graphical organizers and designing WebQuests. Learn more about Dodge and his work at edweb.sdsu.edu/people/bdodge/bdodge.html or www.educationworld.com/a_tech/tech020.shtml.

Bruce Friend is the chief academic officer for Florida Online High School. He is responsible for curriculum development and instruction of online courses, student/school services and student registration. Bruce, for-

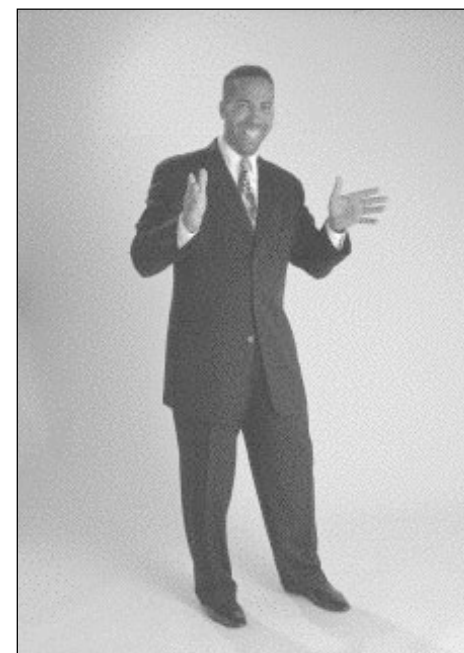
merly a middle-grades and high school teacher, brings to the conference his experiences in course development and standards, working with legislatures, and educational issues related to online learning. For details, visit www.fhs.net/FHSWeb.nsf/Home?Open.

John R. Kuglin, a former school district technology coordinator, develops and implements the University of Montana's distance learning and online efforts. He also conducts national outreach presentations for the Earth Observing System, a NASA-appropriated research project that places cutting-edge satellite imagery and data sets directly into the hands of classroom teachers. Visit Kuglin's web site at www.kuglin.com/.

Mary Alice Anderson is the media/technology specialist at Winona Middle School in Minnesota and a regular contributor to professional journals. Her school's media/technology program received the 1997 Gale DISCovering/Multimedia Schools Information Technology Award. Want to know more? Go to www.winona.k12.mn.us/wms/teachers/manderso.html.



David A. Sousa



Mychal Wynn

Six schools win state Blue Ribbon honors

Six Kentucky elementary schools have won state-level Blue Ribbon Schools honors for 2000-01:

- Adairville Elementary, Logan County
- Centerfield Elementary, Oldham County
- Deer Park Elementary, Daviess County
- Goshen Elementary, Oldham County
- Salem Elementary, Russell County
- Whitesville Elementary, Daviess County

All six schools are now eligible for national recognition in the U.S. Department of Education Blue Ribbon Schools program.

"These schools are models for other elementary schools in the state," said Education Commissioner Gene Wilhoit. "They will represent the state well in the national competition."

To be recognized by the Blue Ribbon Schools program, schools must demonstrate a strong commitment to educational excellence to all students. The program serves three purposes: to identify and recognize outstanding public and private schools across the nation; to make research-based effectiveness criteria available to all schools for self-assessment and improvement; and to encourage schools to share information about best practices.

The Kentucky Department of Education sent applications to Kentucky schools, invited nominations, and asked a panel of Kentucky educators and citizens to review all nominations and select the top six. The six selected schools are now in the running for national recognition in the national Blue Ribbon Schools program. The U.S. Department of Education will announce the national winners in the spring of 2001.

The Blue Ribbon Schools program recognizes elementary and middle-secondary schools in alternate years. For more information, go to www.ed.gov/offices/OERI/BlueRibbonSchools/ on the Internet or contact Kay Anne Wilborn at (502) 564-3421, (800) 533-5372 or kwilborn@kde.state.ky.us.

Textbook reviewers needed

The Department of Education and the State Textbook Commission invite Kentucky educators, parents and lay citizens to apply to review science textbooks and instructional materials, both print and electronic, for the state's public schools, grades P-12.

Reviewers will meet for one day during May 2001 to receive training and establish evaluation criteria. The team will meet for a week during July 2001 to review instructional resources and develop recommendations for the State Textbook Commission.

By state law, reviewers must represent specific areas of experience and expertise. Teams will include parents, educators and lay citizens and will be balanced for gender, geographic and ethnic diversity. Reviewers will receive a stipend and expense reimbursement. Reviewers must be present during the entire week of the review.

To request details or a copy of the application, write to Carol Tuning, Instructional Resources Consultant, Division of Curriculum Development, 18th Floor Capital Plaza Tower, 500 Mero Street, Frankfort, KY 40601; send e-mail to ctuning@kde.state.ky.us; or send a fax to (502) 564-9848.

Completed applications must be postmarked, e-mailed or faxed by 4 p.m. EST Feb. 28, 2001.



Photo by Rick McComb

OFF TO A GREAT START — Primary student Tynesha Bussey practices her writing skills in Susan Brurer's class at Audubon Traditional Elementary in Jefferson County.

World Book now free online

Want your students to research the habits of aardvarks or find out how astronauts work in zero gravity? Now they can find such information in World Book Online, at no cost to your school.

The Kentucky Virtual Library, at the request of the Kentucky Department of Education, has purchased the rights to offer the searchable, multimedia World Book Online to all schools — in fact, to any Kentuckian with Internet access. Schools would have to pay several hundred dollars each to put this resource at teachers' and students' fingertips.

World Book Online editors update the resource regularly. This year, they have revised 4,110 articles and added more than 715 new ones.

To find World Book Online from a Kentucky Education Technology System networked computer, go to www.kyvl.org, click on "Catalogs and Databases," then on "Select a Single Database." Go to the bottom of that page and click on "World Book Online." Bookmark for fast future access.

Access from a computer not on the KETS system requires a password and log-in code, which are available from any school or public library.

For more information, contact Diane Culbertson at the Kentucky Department of Education at (502) 564-7168 or dculbert@kde.state.ky.us.

Talk to us!

Teachers: *Kentucky Teacher* wants to know what you think, what you need from the Department of Education, what you want to see in future issues.



E-mail kyteacher@kde.state.ky.us



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(toll free in Kentucky)



Fax (502) 564-6470



Write *Kentucky Teacher*
1914 Capital Plaza Tower
500 Mero St.
Frankfort, KY 40601

Training sessions coming for regional reading leaders

Eisenhower Reading Leader Training Sessions will begin in mid-February 2001. Two publications, "Dimensions of Learning" (ASCD/McRel) and "What Works in Classroom Instruction?" (Marzano, 2000), will provide a framework for addressing the needs of all 4-12 grade levels.

Session planners encourage content-area and English/language arts teachers to participate. Registration is required. Each region will announce session dates, times and sites in January. For further information, contact the appropriate regional service center language arts consultant. All eight are listed on the KETS global e-mail list.

Region 1: Lynda Coleman, (270) 762-3217, lc Coleman@kde.state.ky.us

Region 2: Jackie Bretz, (270) 746-7063, jbretz@kde.state.ky.us

Region 3: Brenda Overturf, boverturf1@jefferson.k12.ky.us; or Tish Wilson, TWilson1@jefferson.k12.ky.us; (502) 485-3850 (Note: Sessions in this region may begin after February.)

Region 4: Jeanette Hodges, (859) 292-6778, ext. 21, jhodges@kde.state.ky.us

Region 5: Linda Holbrook, (859) 257-4907, lhobrook@kde.state.ky.us

Region 6: Lisa Smith, (606) 862-0282, lasmith@kde.state.ky.us

Region 7: Paula Stafford, (606) 783-5377, pstaffor@kde.state.ky.us

Region 8: Carole Mullins, (606) 886-0205, cmullins@kde.state.ky.us

Kentucky Opera offers curriculum and training



Photo by Rick McComb

Zhanna Goldentul (left) from the University of Louisville offers costume design pointers to Olga Pinchuck, a junior at Atherton High School in Jefferson County. Pinchuck and her fellow students are preparing to produce an opera they wrote using the Kentucky Opera's "Music! Words! Opera!" curriculum.

With a new curriculum from Kentucky Opera, students in grades 7-12 learn about the operatic art form by writing stories, composing music and building sets and costumes for their own operatic productions.

Kentucky Opera's "Music! Words! Opera!" curriculum, a product of Opera America, offers a number of connections to Kentucky's curriculum requirements. It includes a five-day professional development session for three-teacher teams from each participating school. The training, scheduled for June 2001 in Louisville, equips teachers to incorporate opera into their own instruction and facilitate the creation of the students' operas.

Each participating teacher will receive either a \$250 stipend or credit for advanced degrees from the University of Louisville. Each participating school will receive \$500 for production costs plus the assistance of a professional artist-consultant who works with students to compose music, design and build sets, and make costumes.

There is a \$120 per-teacher fee for the program manual.

Kentucky Opera will accept applications starting in January through May 1, 2001, for the 2001-02 school year. To apply or request details, contact Mary York, manager of education and outreach for the Kentucky Opera, at (502) 561-7925 or (800) 690-9236 or by e-mail at mary_york@kyopera.org.

"Music! Words! Opera!" is sponsored by PNC Bank and the Fund for the Arts.

UK Grad School offers free courses

The University of Kentucky Graduate School is offering any college or university graduate the opportunity to take one three-credit-hour course free of charge. Typical graduate course tuition is \$591.

The offer is available to anyone with a bachelor's degree who is not part

of a formal master's or doctoral program and is registering for the first time in the graduate school. Completion of the Graduate Record Examination is not required.

Applications are due Jan. 5, 2001 and must include \$30 for processing.

For more information, phone (859) 257-4905 or write to the Graduate School, 359 Patterson Office Tower, University of Kentucky, Lexington, KY 40506-0027. Details and applications are also available on the Web at www.rgs.uky.edu/gs/GIFT.html.

Web site encourages students to read and evaluate books

An Internet site encourages students to read books by posting selected titles and asking students to read them and vote for their favorites.

The Kentucky Bluegrass Award site lists 15 to 25 book titles in each of four grade divisions (K-2, 3-5, 6-8 and 9-12). After students read and vote, the author and illustrator of the favorite book in each division is invited to Kentucky to receive the award.

An ad hoc committee selects books

for a master list from titles nominated by Kentucky teachers and librarians, publishers and other children's literature professionals. Participating schools and libraries receive the list plus other materials in April and choose which of the books they will purchase for their collections. Reading and voting occurs during the fall and winter months, with vote tally sheets due the following April 1.

Any Kentucky school or library

may participate in the Kentucky Bluegrass Award Program, which is supported by the Kentucky Reading Association and the Kentucky School Media Association.

For more information, go to www.nku.edu/~smithjen/kba on the Internet or contact Jennifer Smith, Northern Kentucky University, W. Frank Steely Library, Highland Heights, KY 41099; (859) 572-6620; smithjen@nku.edu.

Attention, library media specialists: The Kentucky Bluegrass Award Program will be the subject of a Kentucky Telelinking Network Special Topics Roundtable from 4:15 p.m. to 5:15 p.m. ET on Feb. 5. The live, interactive telecast will offer opportunities to ask questions and hear reviews of several books on the reading lists. Contact Jennifer Smith for details.

THE Bulletin Board

By Lisa York Gross
Kentucky Department of Education

Videoconferences available to library media specialists

A professional development series from Scott County High School addresses topics of interest to library media specialists and provides experience in videoconferencing.

Margaret Roberts and Margaret Omlor, library media specialists at Scott County, host "Special Topics in School Librarianship" through the Kentucky Telelinking Network (KTLN). While the series started in October, educators can still take advantage of live, interactive sessions in February, March and April. Tune in from 4:15 p.m. to 5:15 p.m. on the first Monday of each month. To locate a KTLN site in or near your community, visit www.ket.org and click on the KTLN link.

Session planners invite topic ideas and volunteers to host future programs. For more information, contact Omlor or Roberts at (502) 863-4131, ext. 1292 or 1200, or send e-mail to momlor@scott.k12.ky.us or mroberts@scott.k12.ky.us.

Essay contest announced

"What is the Stake of the American People and Government in Efforts by International Agencies to Control Infectious Disease in Developing Countries?" High school students can vie for local, state and national prizes by answering that question in an essay contest sponsored by the United Nations Association of the United States of America.

The deadline for submitting essays to local chapters is April 13, 2001. Details are available online at www.unausa.org/programs/nhsessay.htm.

Contact: Roger Geeslin, rgeeslin31@cs.com, (502) 897-2396

KASAP conference scheduled for February

The Kentucky Association of Student Assistance Professionals' sixth annual conference is set for Feb. 22, 2001, at the Executive West in Louisville. The theme is "Serving the Needs of All Students." The featured presenter will be Tom Jackson, director of the Active Learning Foundation.

Workshop topics include hands-on teaching strategies, school safety, Title IV update and self-care.

For a conference brochure, call Beth Hicks at (502) 454-8402 or e-mail her at Beth.Hicks@ahsrockets.org.

Deadline extended for high school marker papers

The Department of Education has extended the deadline for submission of student work to the Kentucky Marker Papers: Grades 9-12 project until Jan. 31, 2001.

The department is collecting these papers for review by Kentucky teachers who will meet in February to select examples, annotate them and suggest "next lessons" based on the strengths and weaknesses in each paper. The papers will be available to teachers who complete training on ways to use them as instructional tools.

Submit personal narratives, articles, poems, persuasive letters, short stories, memoirs and editorials from grades 9, 10 or 11 to Cherry Boyles at the Kentucky Department of Education, Capital Plaza Tower, 500 Mero Street, Frankfort, KY 40601.

CONTACT: Cherry Boyles, (502) 564-2106; cboyles@kde.state.ky.us

'Perfect Partnership' conference will be Jan. 5, 6

The Kentucky Alliance of Black School Educators and the Kentucky Department of Education will sponsor "The Perfect Partnership: Parents, Teachers and Administrators" conference Jan. 5 and 6, 2001, at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Louisville. Sessions will show how the three groups can work together to support success for every child.

For conference information, phone Lucretia Young-Woodford at (502) 458-2120 or Kathryn Wallace at (502) 564-3301, or send e-mail to kwallace@kde.state.ky.us.

We the People competition set

This year's "We the People ... the Citizen and the Constitution" statewide competition will occur on Feb. 19, 2001, at Franklin County High School in Frankfort. The annual competition, sponsored by the Kentucky Supreme Court and the Administrative Office of the Courts, is part of the "We the People ..." national scholastic program for teaching students about the U.S. Constitution and the Bill of Rights. School teams compete in annual mock congressional hearings.

CONTACT: Rachel Bingham, Administrative Office of the Courts, (800) 928-2350; RachelB@mail.aoc.state.ky.us

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Kentucky Teacher

News for the Nation's Most Innovative Educators

DECEMBER 2000 - JANUARY 2001



Photo by Rick McComb

COUNTING UP — Primary student Kristen Baker uses a handy approach to solve a mathematics problem at Brodhead Elementary. The students' high test scores have placed the Rockcastle County school in the top 3 percent in the state's academic standings. To read about the strategies behind the success, see Page 10.

"I think many states will be watching us on this, because eliminating the achievement gap is important to every state, community and person in the nation. Here in Kentucky, closing the gap is especially significant. We cannot reach proficiency unless we do so."

Associate Commissioner Bernard Hamilton on a pilot project to test specific approaches to education equity. See Page 3.

Kentucky Department of Education

Gene Wilhoit, Commissioner

Visit the Kentucky Department of Education's Web site: www.kde.state.ky.us